

## **Developing practice examples for 'Our Creative Journey'**

### **Background**

'Our Creative Journey' is intended to promote the value of creativity for children attending registered early learning and childcare, with a particular focus on expressive arts. By highlighting specific examples of how children have benefitted from experiencing expressive arts, we hope that this will be a useful resource for practitioners and act as a catalyst for the improvement all services. It is intended to be one of a series of resources promoting creative play and learning.

'Our Creative Journey' develops the same model as the Care Inspectorate's recent resource, 'My World Outdoors', which shares and celebrates the benefits of outdoor play for children. Rather than issuing expert guidance in the traditional style of a remote statutory regulator, we are working with early learning and childcare partners to enable practitioners to tell their own stories of how they are having a positive impact on children's lives. For this resource, we also want to develop this model further by focussing more on individual children and involving them and their families directly in narrating their experience. Like 'My World Outdoors', the resource will be structured using the GIRFEC Wellbeing Indicators of Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Respected, Responsible and Included. Each practice example will illustrate one or more of these SHANARRI indicators and will show how expressive arts can positively impact on children's outcomes. We hope that the resource can convey the transformative potential when children are encouraged to play using expressive arts in a way that stimulates their curiosity and imagination. With this in mind, we are asking services to focus more on the creative process rather than the end product in the form of a performance or artwork.

This resource is intended to be both practical and inspiring for the greatest number of people and we are looking for stories from the length and breadth of Scotland, including rural as well as urban settings and deprived as well as affluent communities. We also want to select examples that reflect the wide age range of children attending registered services, from babies through to secondary school age children, and the different needs and backgrounds of children using care. So that the resource is as applicable as possible, we are looking for examples from all types of registered services and providers from the private, voluntary and statutory sectors. This includes childminding, private nurseries and out of school care, as well as local authority nurseries. We want to include experiences that can be practically applied on the ground by practitioners in a range of settings and not just feature services graded as 'outstanding'. We are also intending to include examples from non-registered provision such as voluntary organisations supporting children and parents through expressive arts and social work services working with children and young people.

We intend to publish Our Creative Journey as a printable resource in September 2017, but it will also be a live resource with practice examples regularly updated on the Hub website.

## **Selecting practice examples**

Examples have been initially identified by the Care Inspectorate and the following early learning and childcare umbrella groups and specialist arts organisations with whom we are producing the resource:

Association of Head and Depute Heads Scotland  
Care and Learning Alliance  
Creative Scotland  
Education Scotland  
National Day Nurseries Association  
Play Scotland  
Scottish Childminding Association  
Starcatchers  
Scottish Out of School Care Network.

Organisations that identified services completed a standard form for each example they are sponsoring and a sub group then selected a suitable range of potential examples.

## **Producing practice examples**

We are looking for practice examples that convey the child's experience in the most direct, inspiring and engaging way. Therefore we are not proposing one prescriptive format for presenting each practice example and we are open to them modelling creativity, outcomes and co-production in how they are produced. Although we want all the wellbeing indicators and different service types to be covered, we do not have in mind a set number of examples or how in-depth they should be. Some examples can be very brief vignettes and others more in-depth, but we want them all to capture the reader's imagination in a similar way to how the children's imaginations were captured in the first place!

Who relates each narrative and which tools are used can vary. For instance, examples can simply be related in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person using text and no images describing an expressive arts activity. Or children, parents and practitioners can be directly involved in telling their own stories, using quotes, photos or video clips. A range of narrative voices and tools that can be used, along a spectrum of co-production from a traditional 3<sup>rd</sup> person 'expert' style to a child filming and narrating their own expressive arts journey, are described below. Some services may already have text, photos, or video to illustrate the example and might be able to be directly lifted into the resource.

## **Voices**

1. 3<sup>rd</sup> person expert voice of the Care Inspectorate. We want this expert voice to present the introduction to the resource and formally endorse the examples within our regulatory and scrutiny framework. For the examples themselves however, this

should be kept a minimum and the more powerful and authentic voices of people relating their own direct experience is preferred.

2. Practitioner voice narrating the whole experience, which could include the perspective of children and parents. This could consist of more than one practitioner, although showing how a practitioner's approach to playing creatively using expressive arts is likely to be more powerfully portrayed by an individual rather than as a group.

3. Parent voice narrating their child's experience and the positive impact of expressive arts, including the perspective of others. Again a group of parents could do this, but speaking from one person's lived experience can be more direct and effective.

4. Child voice, which could include the perspective of others. Having an individual child tell their own story would demonstrate impact on outcomes more effectively than a group.

### **Tools – Format for materials**

1. Text. This could be produced from observation, discussion with those involved or structured interview/s. We won't put limits on the amount of text you submit, but keep in mind we'll aim to keep every example to no more than two sides of A4 in length.

2. Direct quotes.

3. Photographs. Again, please submit as many photos as you wish and we can pick the best ones, the format should be high resolution jpeg for all photos.

4. Other images, such as artwork.

4. Oral or video recordings. These can be embedded as links in the text of the resource. Recordings should be no more than ten minutes long.

The Care Inspectorate can help with any of the above, but again putting the means of production directly into the hands of practitioners, parents and children might lead to more creative products!

### **Next steps**

Services will be contacted by a member of the group, usually the organisation that suggested their practice example. The sponsoring organisation will discuss the aims of the resource with the service and share relevant background documents such as this guidance and a copy of My World Outdoors. The sponsor will then explore with the practitioner/s and child/ren involved in the expressive arts activity the best vehicle for sharing their creative journey.

This dialogue will include discussing the extent to which services and individuals will be named or identifiable when the resource is published. Services featured in My World Outdoors were happy to be named and we should not assume that individuals participating would not also welcome being named and identified for this resource, which similarly shares and celebrates good practice in a positive way. We hope that the process of being featured in this resource will in itself be a positive experience and that individual practitioners, children and parents will welcome seeing their journey shared online and in print now and in the future. At the same time, some individuals will choose not to be identified and some services will have policies not to identify individual services and people. Different levels of anonymity should be explored. For example, if initials rather than names are used or broad descriptions such as age, gender, background or location, this might mean that individuals could still be identified. Similarly, photographs or videos can be used without featuring individual faces, but individuals might be identifiable. Clearly the examples will be more powerful if individuals can be featured openly and we can show how personal outcomes can be transformed through expressive arts and at the end of the day it is highly unlikely that anything negative would result for individuals being featured. However it is important that this is discussed and agreed fully beforehand.

The Care Inspectorate will ask that relevant consent is obtained and a consent form completed by everyone participating.

We cannot give a guarantee from the outset that all examples will be included. As we are looking for a spread of examples from across the country featuring a range of service types, ages and backgrounds of children, we are unlikely to be able to include all in the resource, but we can guarantee that if not selected for the printed resource, then we will feature on the live online HUB pages that will complement the publication. If services and individuals want this, they can be named and thanked in the resource itself.

**Henry Mathias**  
**23/2/17**